

PATENT

Application # 09/680,940

Attorney Docket # 1999-0725 (1014-163)

REMARKS

The Examiner is respectfully thanked for the thoughtful consideration provided to this application. Reconsideration of this application is respectfully requested in light of the foregoing amendments and the following remarks.

The Examiner is further thanked for indicating that each of claims 16, 17, 29, and 30 would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. The Examiner is thanked for indicating that each of claims 16, 17, 29, and 30 would be allowable if rewritten to overcome the rejection under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

Consistent the Examiner's determination and with 35 U.S.C. 112, 4th paragraph, each of claims 16, 17, 29, and 30 has been amended from dependent to independent form and includes all of the limitations of the former independent claim and any intervening claims to which it referred and thereby incorporated by reference. Thus, for each of claims 16, 17, 29, and 30 the current amendment of that claim does not narrow its scope in the least because the currently amended claim is identical in scope to its form prior to the current amendment.

Each of claims 1-15 and 18-28 has been cancelled without prejudice or disclaimer.

Claims 16, 17, 29, and 30 are now pending in this application. Each of claims 16, 17, 29, and 30 are in independent form.

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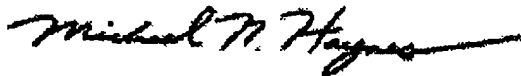
CONCLUSION

It is respectfully submitted that, in view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, the application as amended is in clear condition for allowance. Reconsideration, withdrawal of all grounds of rejection, and issuance of a Notice of Allowance are earnestly solicited.

The Office is hereby authorized to charge any additional fees or credit any overpayments under 37 C.F.R. 1.16 or 1.17 to Deposit Account No. 50-2504. The Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at 434-972-9988 to discuss any matter regarding this application.

Respectfully submitted,

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